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(54) Pet bed

(57) A pet bed has a perforate base wall 10 supported on a skirt wall, and a side wall 11. The skirt wall has a cut-away portion 13, in order to allow the free flow of air to the space below the base wall, and through the apertures 15 in the base wall. A container is attached to the underside of the base wall, directly beneath at least some of the apertures 15, and holds a pad 21 impregnated with an active chemical such as an insecticide, which slowly evaporates through the apertures, to treat an animal using the bed.

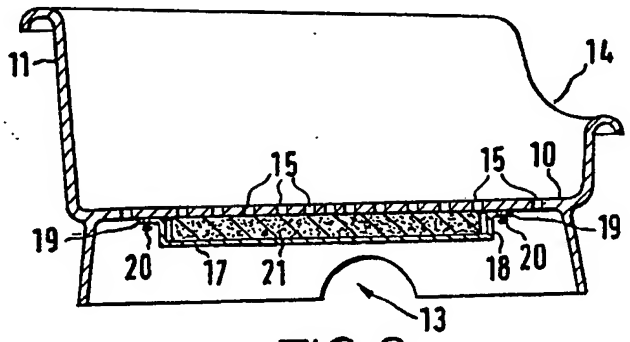

FIG. 2

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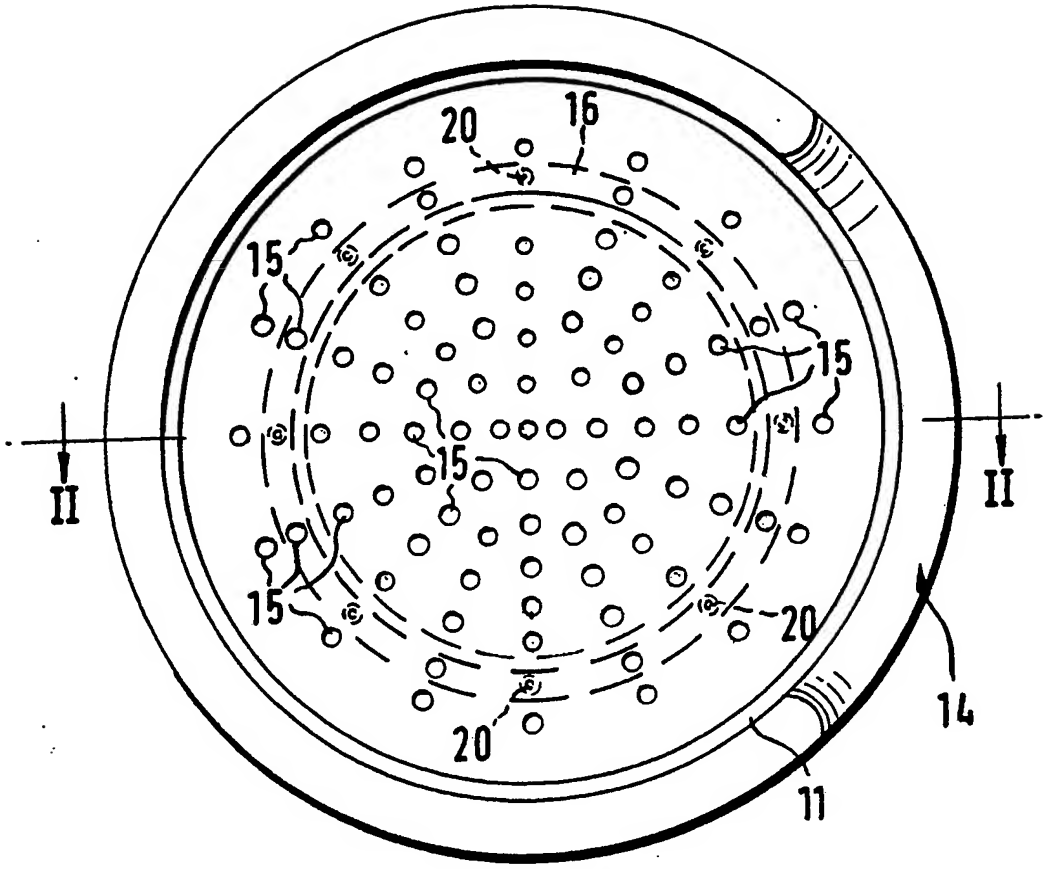
At least one drawing originally filed was informal and the print reproduced here is taken from a later filed formal copy.

The claims were filed later than the filing date within the period prescribed by Rule 25(1) of the Patents Rules 1982.


20
16
15
15
15
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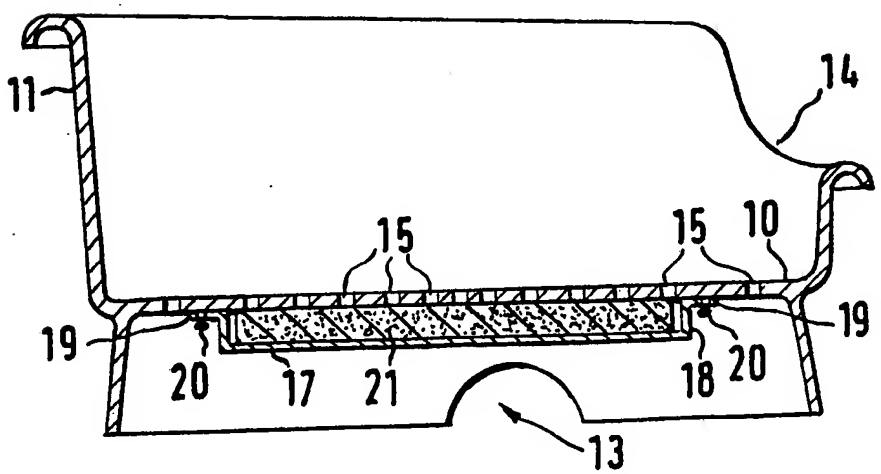
20
20
II
II
14
11

FIG. 1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13

FIG. 2

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PET BED

This invention relates to a bed for domestic animals, and in particular - but not exclusively - to such a bed which may be manufactured by plastics moulding techniques.

Beds for domestic cats and dogs (hereinafter referred to as 'pets') and manufactured by moulding operations from plastics materials are commonly employed in view of the advantages that such beds may offer, as compared to beds manufactured from other materials. A plastics material pet bed is hygienic, in that it is not prone to becoming infested with various animal parasites, and in that the bed may easily be cleaned by simple washing procedures. However, a problem associated with many pet beds moulded from plastics material is that the heat generated by the body of an animal using the bed gives rise to condensation problems in view of the non-absorbent properties of the plastics material. One aspect of this problem is that if bedding is used to line a plastics material pet bed, that bedding tends to become damp after an animal has been lying in the bed for some while. In turn, such dampness may give rise to conditions suitable both for the growth of moulds, and for the harbouring of parasites. A further aspect of this problem is that condensation may form on the underside of the bed, especially when the bed has a skirt wall raising the base surface above the

ground, and that condensation may then drip on the floor surface or carpet beneath the bed. In turn, this may lead to damage to the floor or carpet.

It is a principal aim of the present invention to provide a bed for domestic animals which may give improved conditions for an animal using the bed, as compared to known forms of moulded plastics material pet beds, as discussed above.

Accordingly, this invention provides a bed for domestic animals which bed has a base wall and means to support the base wall a pre-determined distance above a surface, the base wall being provided with a plurality of apertures and there being means to mount below the base wall a source of an active chemical which source is adapted for the release of the active chemical upwardly through at least some of said apertures when the bed is in use.

It will be appreciated that in the pet bed of this invention, the provision of a plurality of apertures in the base wall of the bed will allow air to pass through the base wall and so to ventilate the bed and any bedding which may be placed on the base wall. Such ventilation by circulation of air may significantly reduce the occurrence of condensation, which in turn helps to reduce the likelihood of any bedding employed becoming damp, so providing better conditions for an animal using the bed. In addition, by providing the bed with means to mount a source of an active chemical below

the base wall, there is provided the possibility of chemically treating the bedding or an animal using the bed. The nature of the treatment will of course depend upon the selection of the particular active chemical which is supported beneath the base wall of the bed.

In a preferred embodiment of this invention, the mounting means comprises a support adapted to be secured in a releasable manner beneath the base wall, which support may hold a carrier for a selected active chemical to effect the required treatment of an animal using the bed, or of the bedding. That support conveniently is in the form of a container or tray, adapted to be mounted in a releasable manner beneath the base wall, to permit access to the source of active chemicals. Such a container or tray may be attached to the base wall for instance by press or other snap fasteners, or by screw fasteners, as appropriate.

Alternatively, the mounting means may be arranged to permit the direct attachment of the source of active chemical to the underside of the base wall of the bed. In this case, the underside of the base wall may have provided thereon one part of a known type of hook-and-loop fastener, the source of active chemical being in the form of a self-supporting solid material and being provided with the other part of said hook-and-loop fastener. Then, the source of active chemical may be secured to the base wall merely by pressing together the

two parts of the hook-and-loop fastener. If the source of active chemical comprises a pad of fabric impregnated with the active chemical, then that pad may be directly attachable to the one part of the hook-and-loop fastener provided on the underside of the base wall, as long as said one part is the hook part of the fastener, whereby the hooks may engage with the threads of the fabric pad.

The active chemical may for example be an insecticide for combatting parasites such as fleas. Alternatively, or in addition, the active chemical may be a fungicide, to prevent the growth of moulds on the bed, on the bedding, or on the surfaces under the base wall. Selection of an appropriate fungicide even allows for the treatment of certain disorders of the animal using the bed. Another possibility is for the active chemical to be a deodorising agent to prevent offensive odours emanating from the bedding or from the animal using the bed. An even further possibility is for the active chemical to be a fragrance, whereby an animal using the bed will assume a fragrance pleasing to the animal owner, as will the bedding itself.

The source of active chemical may comprise a pad of an absorbent material, impregnated with the active chemical in a liquid form, whereby the gradual evaporation of the liquid from the pad releases the active chemical. Another possibility would be to provide the source of the active chemical in the form of a matrix of the active chemical and a solid but slowly

vaporisable material (such as a hydrocarbon wax), whereby the gradual vaporisation of the solid material will release the active chemical. For a case where the mounting means for the active chemical comprises a container, that active chemical may be in liquid form deposited directly in the container, so that the liquid may evaporate therefrom, through the apertures in the base wall.

Most preferably, the bed of this invention has a skirt wall depending downwardly from the base wall, which skirt wall serves to support the base wall at a predetermined distance above a floor surface. In this case, it is advantageous for the skirt wall to have at least one opening therein to permit air freely to enter the space beneath the base wall, and so also to circulate through the apertures therein. Moreover, it is preferred for the bed to have a side wall which upstands from the base wall, the height of the side wall varying around the perimeter of the base wall, and conveniently having a relatively low section whereby the bed may having a "front" to facilitate access to the base wall for an animal using the bed.

By way of example only, one specific embodiment of domestic animal (pet) bed constructed in accordance with the present invention will now be described in detail, reference being made to the accompanying drawings, in which:-

Figure 1 is a plan view of the embodiment of pet bed of this invention; and

Figure 2 is a vertical cross sectional view through the pet bed of Figure 1.

Referring to the drawings, it can be seen that a pet bed of this invention comprises a generally circular base wall 10 having an upstanding side wall 11 extending around the periphery of the base wall 10, and a skirt wall 12 also extending around the periphery of the base wall 10, but projecting downwardly in the opposite direction to the upstanding side wall 11. The skirt wall 12 is of a substantially constant depth, but may be provided with a cut-away portion as shown at 13, in order to permit the free flow of air into the space beneath the base wall 10. By contrast, the side wall 11 has a height which varies therearound, the part of greatest height being diametrically opposed to a section 14 of relatively low height, which defines the "front" of the pet bed and provides a region over which an animal may readily gain access to the base wall 10.

A plurality of apertures 15 is provided through the base wall 10, whereby air may freely pass therethrough. Attached to the underside of the base wall 10 is a a shallow container 16, which container is directly beneath at least some of the apertures 15, as shown in Figure 1. The container 16 has a circular bottom wall 17, an upstanding side wall 18 and an outwardly directed flange 19, the container being

attached to the base wall by means of a plurality of studs 20 projecting downwardly from the base wall 10 and passing through holes formed in the flange 19 of the container. By forming each stud 20 with a rounded head of a slightly greater diameter than the hole diameter in the flange 20, the container 16 may be snapped in position over the heads of the studs and then retained close to the base wall until the container is deliberately removed by snapping the flange over the heads of the studs once more.

As shown in Figure 2, a pad 21 of an absorbent fabric and impregnated with an active chemical may be provided within the container 16, whereby the active chemical may slowly evaporate from the pad 21 and so treat any bedding for the animal provided on the base wall 10, as well as the animal itself. For example, the pad may be impregnated with an insecticide, in a liquid form, or with a deodorising agent or a fragrance, again in a liquid form. It will be appreciated that the warmth of the body of an animal using the bed will promote such evaporation. In addition, the apertures 15 formed in the base wall beyond the periphery of the flange 20 assists the flow of air through the base wall to ventilate any bedding employed on the base wall.

Provided that the studs 20 do not hold the flange 19 closely against the underside of the base wall 10, free flow of air from the space beneath the base wall

into the area confined by the container side wall 18 may take place. The active chemical may in this case act also to treat the space beneath the base wall.

CLAIMS

1. A bed for domestic animals which bed has a base wall and means to support the base wall a pre-determined distance above a surface, the base wall being provided with a plurality of apertures and there being means to mount below the base wall a source of an active chemical which source is adapted for the release of the active chemical upwardly through at least some of said apertures when the bed is in use.

2. A bed according to claim 1, wherein the mounting means comprises a support adapted to be secured in a releasable manner beneath the base wall, which support may hold a carrier for a selected active chemical.

3. A bed according to claim 2, wherein the support is in the form of a container or tray, adapted to be mounted in a releasable manner beneath the base wall.

4. A bed according to claim 3, wherein the container or tray is attachable to the base wall by press or other snap fasteners.

5. A bed according to claim 1, wherein the mounting means is arranged to permit the direct attachment of the source of active chemical to the underside of the base wall of the bed.

6. A bed according to claim 5, wherein the underside of the base wall has provided thereon one part of a hook-and-loop fastener, and the source of active chemical for use with the bed being in the form of a self-supporting

solid material and being provided with the other part of said hook-and-loop fastener.

7. A bed according to claim 6, wherein the underside of the base wall is provided with the hook part of the fastener, for use with a source of active chemical comprising a pad of fabric impregnated with the active chemical.

8. A bed according to any of the preceding claims, wherein the bed has a skirt wall depending downwardly from the base wall, which skirt wall serves to support the base wall at a pre-determined distance above a floor surface.

9. A bed according to claim 8, wherein the skirt wall has at least one opening therein to permit air freely to enter the space beneath the base wall, and so also to circulate through the apertures therein.

10. A bed according to any of the preceding claims, wherein the bed has a side wall which upstands from the base wall, the height of the side wall varying around the perimeter of the base wall.

11. A bed according to claim 1 and substantially as hereinbefore described, with reference to and as illustrated in the accompanying drawings.

12. The combination of a bed according to any of claims 1 to 11 and a source of active chemical mounted on the underside of the base-wall, for treating the animal and/or its bed or bedding.

13. The combination of claim 12, wherein the source of active chemical comprises a pad of an absorbent material, and impregnated with the active chemical in a liquid form, whereby the gradual evaporation of the liquid from the pad releases the active chemical.

14. The combination of claim 12, wherein the source of the active chemical is in the form of a matrix of the active chemical and a solid but slowly vaporisable material, whereby the gradual vaporisation of the solid material releases the active chemical.

15. The combination of claim 12, wherein the mounting means for the active chemical comprises a container, and the active chemical is in liquid form, which liquid is deposited directly in the container for evaporation therefrom.

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